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# Articles in Today's Clips

**Wednesday, July 26, 2006**

(Be sure to maximize your screen to read your clips)

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## Dad charged in baby's drowning death in tub

ASSOCIATED PRESS

*July 26, 2006*

YPSILANTI -- A father was charged Tuesday with involuntary manslaughter and child neglect after police said he left his three young children unattended in a bathtub and an infant drowned.

Jason Franklin, 29, was arraigned in 14A District Court before Magistrate Camille Horne, who set bail at \$200,000.

Police said Franklin put his children in a motel bathtub Saturday so he could watch television. Franklin fell asleep and was awakened by his 3-year-old daughter and 2-year-old son shaking him, said Ypsilanti Interim Police Chief Matt Harshberger.

Water was overflowing from the tub and 8-month-old Jammael Franklin was floating face down in the bathroom, Harshberger said.

The mother had left for dinner with relatives.

Harshberger said the family had stayed at the Harmony House Motel for a few days and previously lived with a relative in Ypsilanti Township.

Franklin also faces felony drug charges in Washtenaw County in a past incident, police said.

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## — THE — ANN ARBOR NEWS

### Father charged in baby's death

Drowned child's mother says partner shouldn't be blamed for 'big accident'

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

**BY SUSAN L. OPPAT**

**News Staff Reporter**

The mother of an 8-month-old Ypsilanti boy who drowned in his father's care over the weekend stood behind the man in court Tuesday as he was charged with involuntary manslaughter.

Amanda Ward, mother of Jammael Franklin, who died Saturday at an Ypsilanti motel, disputed police claims of what happened while the baby and his 2-year-old brother and 3-year-old sister were taking a bath.

Ward said the children's father, Jason L. Franklin, 29, "is the best dad to these three kids. They mean everything to him. This was a big accident."

Franklin was charged Tuesday with the 15-year felony after police said he put the three children in the bath and left the water running while he turned the television from the children's channel to something he wanted to watch. Then, police said, Franklin fell asleep.

Police say the toddlers woke their father and he found the baby floating face-down in the tub. Police found the naked baby lying on the concrete in front of the office at the Harmony House Motel, where the family was living temporarily. When police went to Franklin's room and asked him about the baby, Franklin initially denied he was the baby's father.

Ward, who had left the motel to celebrate her mother's birthday, said the baby couldn't have died the way police reported. She said Franklin didn't watch television and always watched the children when they were in the tub. She said he told her that he had drained the tub, and the 2-year-old must have done what he always does - stood on the wall of the tub to reach the spigot, and turn the water back on so he could play in it.

Ypsilanti Police Detective Deric Gress said before the hearing that police are skeptical of that scenario.

Ward said Franklin told her the water never overflowed the tub as police reported; she said it was splashed on the floor by the children.

Ward said the baby was left alone at the motel office because a woman told Franklin she was a nurse and would take care of the baby while Franklin retrieved the other children. Instead, she said, the woman turned out to be a crack cocaine user who became afraid and left the baby in front of the office. Gress confirmed police are familiar with the woman.

Ward acknowledged that Franklin lied about being the baby's father because he was sought on felony warrants for possession of drugs with intent to deliver, maintaining a drug house, and violation of probation.

"I'm not blaming (Franklin)," Ward said outside the hearing. "This was an accident. He didn't spank the kids, ever.

"Mistakes were made, and we all lost," she said.

The cause of the baby's death is pending, while Washtenaw County Medical Examiner Bader Cassin waits for microscopic examination of tissues. But Cassin said there were no clear signs of trauma to the child. Test results could take another three weeks.

Franklin struggled to talk through tears during his arraignment at the Washtenaw County Jail. Jail Cmdr. Kirk Filsinger said after the hearing that Franklin is on a suicide watch.

First assistant public defender Timothy R. Niemann said Franklin is within two credits of graduating from Eastern Michigan University. Franklin told Magistrate Camille Horne he is a graphic artist.

Niemann asked for Franklin's release from jail for the baby's funeral, scheduled for Friday.

"This is one of the more emotional cases I've dealt with in many years," Niemann told Horne. He searched for some tissues to give Franklin, to wipe the tears from his face.

"This man needs to be home with his family at this time, he needs to attend the funeral for his son," Niemann said.

But Horne went along with the Ypsilanti police request for a \$200,000 cash bond. Franklin is also being held without bond on the probation violation charges.

After the hearing, Niemann said his office will look into seeking a pass from the jail for the funeral.

Deputy chief assistant prosecutor Steve Hiller said the final decision on a pass will be made by the judge, but his office would not immediately agree to one. He said prosecutors would consider public safety, the risk Franklin would flee, and whether his temporary release would allow any form of witness tampering or intimidation. The baby's death "is a circumstance that would auger in favor of our opposing it," he said.

Even if a judge approves a motion for a pass, Franklin's family would have to put up a \$500 deposit to cover the cost of sending a guard with him to the funeral, Filsinger said.

During the arraignment Tuesday, Ward wore a dog tag at the jail bearing a likeness of her brother, David Enright, a 13-year-old Ypsilanti boy killed in a traffic crash in Canton in February.

Susan Oppat can be reached at [soppat@annarbornews.com](mailto:soppat@annarbornews.com) or at 734-482-1166.

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## Trial set to see if Rose's siblings, parents will part

**FLINT**

**THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION**

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

**By Paul Janczewski**

**pjanczewski@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6333**

A trial is scheduled for Oct. 25 to determine if a court will end three parents' rights to the surviving siblings of a young girl who died in squalor in her Flint home.

The trial, before Genesee Probate Judge Robert E. Weiss, also will include expert witnesses for prosecutors and defense attorneys to determine if Rose Kelley, 5, died because of neglect.

Dr. Ljubisa J. Dragovic, the Oakland County medical examiner, earlier ruled that Rose's death was a homicide. He said Rose died from a liver disease that was compounded by neglect.

Assistant Genesee County Prosecutor Marcie M. Mabry and attorneys - representing Michelle L. Bowen, the mother of all four children; Jeffrey Mitchell, the father of Bowen's oldest child; Jeffrey C. Kelley, the father of her three youngest children, including Rose; and the surviving children - will meet Sept. 19 at a pretrial hearing to make sure that all records, reports and other documents have been exchanged.

Weiss also ordered the parents to have no contact with the surviving children.

Bowen, 31, and Kelley, 30, appeared in court with their attorneys but had no comment to the rulings.

Besides Rose, they are also parents to a boy, 6, and a girl, 2.

Mitchell, who fathered a girl, 10, with Bowen, was not in court.

A report from an official from the state Department of Human Services indicated those children would be better off without any further contact with the parents, Mabry said.

Attorney Ternia Carte, who is representing the children, agreed with that recommendation.

Weiss earlier ordered the evaluations to determine the effects, if any, of visitation with the children's parents.

Rose died June 3 in the family's flea- and lice-infested N. Franklin Avenue home after an untreated illness. Sick for five days, she was never taken to a doctor.

Police have said Bowen told them she feared her children would be taken from her if a doctor saw Rose's condition, which included severe head lice and possible malnourishment.

Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton earlier would not comment on the medical examiner's findings but said his office would review Dragovic's full report before deciding on criminal charges.

He was not available Tuesday for comment.

Weiss said his objective now is not reuniting the family but to do what is in the best interests of the surviving children.

"I do not believe (continuing parent time) in the best interests of the children," Weiss said.

He said that ultimately, they may be better off placed in foster care, where they would have "an opportunity to find a home with stability and love."

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## Mom's hearing in 3 months

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

GRAND RAPIDS -- The mother of a 7-year-old boy who accidentally shot and injured his younger sister nearly a year ago has another three months to show she can be a suitable parent, a judge ruled Tuesday. But Susana Pagan, 27, will not have custody of her children, 9-year-old Shanin, 7-year-old Steven and 5-year-old Shania. Kent County Family Court Judge Patrick Hillary said the younger children will remain in the custody of their father, while the oldest child, living with her grandmother, can continue staying with her grandmother as well as her father. Prosecutors could seek to terminate the mother's parental rights. She was at her West Side home when her son fired a weapon police said was left in the house by Pagan's boyfriend. Hillary set another review hearing in three months.

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**WXYZ**

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URL:

**Child Awakes to Stranger in His Bed**

By Anu Prakash

Web produced by Sarah Morgan

July 26, 2006

Wednesday morning a 6-year-old boy awoke to find a strange man sleeping in his bed. The boy screamed for his parents who chased the stranger out and now police are searching for that suspect to find out how and why he was in the boy's room.

The boy's parents said they don't know how the stranger got into their apartment because the doors were all locked.

Commander John Van Gorder said, "The subject gets up out of the bed, he comes out in to the [hall]—it's an apartment complex—father follows him out into the hallway screaming at him. Obviously very upset and chases him out of the building. The subject kept saying he was invited and the people didn't know who this person was at all."

After being chased out of the apartment the stranger rode away on a bicycle.

The parents told investigators the suspect was disoriented and possibly intoxicated.

"If he was there and he was intoxicated by mistake he can come forward and talk to us and we'll find out what happened or there might be more to the situation and we need to find that out too," said Commander Van Gorder.

Investigators will continue to interview the boy to find out if the stranger touched him inappropriately.

If you recognize the suspect call Birmingham police.

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Police are searching for this man after he was discovered in a 6-year-old's bed, Wednesday.





## **Suspect remains jailed**

CORRECTION

**ATLAS TOWNSHIP**

**THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION**

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

**JOURNAL STAFF WRITER**

A Local News article Tuesday about suspect Paul H. Christian, an Atlas Township man charged with first-degree criminal sexual conduct and manufacturing and distributing child pornography, should have said Christian has not met bond and remains in the Genesee County Jail.

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# ClickOnDetroit.com

## Teacher Accused Of Sexual Abuse From 1973

### *Man Arrested In Birmingham*

POSTED: 1:16 pm EDT July 25, 2006

A former teacher has been arrested on charges of sexually abusing a girl in Maryland.

Stanley Virgil Ashman, 60, was arrested in his Birmingham home in June and accused of sexually assaulting a 14-year-old girl in 1973 while he was a teacher at Park School in Maryland, according to a news release.

The alleged abuse took place for three years on the school's property and at his home in Baltimore when he would have the victim baby-sit his children, according to the release.

The victim, whose name has not been released, learned that Ashman was teaching at the Roeper School in Birmingham and called police.

Ashman was charged with child abuse on a warrant from Baltimore County.

Ashman has posted a \$25,000 bond.

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# Parents try, but fail to get rights reinstated

**Judge continues to keep kids separated from parents**



By Taryn Asher

**FLINT (WJRT)** - (07/25/06)-- Their daughter died from neglect while in their care and a judge has again denies Rose Kelley's parents the right to visit their remaining children...

After receiving updates on the progress of their remaining three children, today in court, Judge Robert Weiss decided it was still in the children's best interest to be separated from their parents Jeffrey Kelley and Michelle Bowen.

According to the experts who evaluated the children, all three have improved mentally, emotionally and physically in foster care, without the care of their parents.

The Genesee County prosecutor is still deciding whether to charge Bowen and Kelley with the death of their daughter Rose, after a medical examiner ruled the five-year-old died from neglect.

The little girl suffered liver failure and was found dead in her parents' Flint home last June, in what police have described as deplorable conditions.

Judge Weiss today also cut off any sort of social services Kelley and Bowen have been receiving from the state.

Bowen and Kelley will be back in court in October, when the a jury trial will begin to decide the final status of their parental rights

*You can see the abc12 report by clicking on the video icon above. You will need Windows Media Player to view this video. You can get it FREE by clicking here. NOTE: Video clips will only be available for 7-days from the date they were created. ALSO: Video clips may play in a separate window, without audio, on Mac OS X machines. abc12.com is aware of this issue and is working with the video player vendor to correct it as soon as possible. Copyright 2006 ABC Inc., WJRT-TV Inc.*



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## AP News: General News

### Jury deliberating in Yates murder trial asks to review evidence from prosecution expert

Eds: UPDATES thruout with jury request for definition of insanity, other details; DELETES outdated material.

AP Photo WXS118

By ANGELA K. BROWN

Associated Press Writer

HOUSTON (AP) - Jurors deliberated for a second day Tuesday without reaching a verdict in Andrea Yates' murder retrial but reviewed evidence, including videotapes of two psychiatrists' interviews with the woman who drowned her five children in the bathtub.

The jury, which was being sequestered again for the night, already has deliberated longer than the four hours it took a first jury to convict her of murder in 2002. An appeals court overturned that conviction because erroneous testimony may have influenced jurors.

Before recessing for the day, jurors asked to review the state's definition of insanity: that someone is so mentally ill, he does not know while committing a crime that it is wrong. Yates has pleaded innocent by reason of insanity.

State District Judge Belinda Hill said jurors, who were again sequestered overnight, could see the definition Wednesday morning.

Shortly before a lunch break, jurors asked to review the slide presentation by Dr. Michael Welner, a forensic psychiatrist who evaluated Yates in May and testified that she did not kill her children to save them, as she claims, but because she was overwhelmed and felt inadequate as a mother.

Welner said that although Yates was psychotic on the day of the June 2001 drownings, he found multiple examples that she knew killing 6-month-old Mary, 2-year-old Luke, 3-year-old Paul, 5-year-old John and 7-year-old Noah was wrong.

Yates, 42, who has pleaded innocent by reason of insanity, is charged in only three of the children's deaths, which is common in cases involving multiple slayings.

If the jurors find her innocent by reason of insanity, Yates will be committed to a state mental hospital, with periodic hearings before a judge to determine whether she should be released - though prosecutors weren't allowed to tell that to the jury. If convicted of murder, she will be sentenced to life in prison.

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A capital murder conviction in Texas carries either life in prison or the death penalty. Prosecutors could not seek death this time because the first trial's jurors sentenced her to life in prison, and authorities found no new evidence.

The jury also asked to review the videotape of Yates' July 2001 evaluation by Dr. Phillip Resnick, a forensic psychiatrist who testified she did not know killing the youngsters was wrong because she was trying to save them from hell.

Resnick told jurors that Yates was delusional and believed she had ruined her children so much that they would grow up to be criminals.

Jurors later asked to review Yates' November 2001 videotaped evaluation by Dr. Park Dietz, the state's expert witness whose testimony led an appeals court to overturn Yates' 2002 capital murder conviction.

Dietz, a forensic psychiatrist, testified in her first trial that an episode of the television series 'Law & Order' depicted a woman who was acquitted by reason of insanity after drowning her children. But those involved in Yates' case later learned no such episode existed. The judge barred attorneys in this trial from mentioning that issue.

On Tuesday, after jurors also asked for the trial transcript involving defense attorney George Parnham's questioning of Dietz about the definition of an obsession, the judge brought the jury back into the courtroom.

The court reporter then read the transcript in which Dietz said Yates 'believed that Satan was at least present. She felt or sensed the presence.' Dietz had testified that Yates' thoughts about harming her children were an obsession and a symptom of severe depression - not psychosis.



## Jury finds Yates not guilty in drownings

7/26/2006, 2:18 p.m. ET

By **ANGELA K. BROWN**  
The Associated Press

HOUSTON (AP) — Andrea Yates was found not guilty by reason of insanity Wednesday in her second murder trial for the bathtub drownings of her young children.

Yates, 42, will now be committed to a state mental hospital, with periodic hearings before a judge to determine whether she should be released. An earlier jury had found her guilty of murder, but the verdict was overturned on appeal.

The defense never disputed that Yates drowned her five children one by one in the bathtub of their Houston-area home. But they said she suffered from severe postpartum psychosis and, in a delusional state, believed Satan was inside her and was trying to save them from hell.

Yates stared wide-eyed in court Wednesday as the verdict was read. She then bowed her head and wept quietly.

The children's father said the jury had reached the right conclusion.

"The jury looked past what happened and looked at why it happened," Rusty Yates told reporters outside the courthouse. "Prosecutors had the truth of the first day and stopped there. Yes, she was psychotic. That's the whole truth."

Rusty Yates divorced Andrea Yates after the children's June 2001 deaths and recently remarried. He said they are still "friends" and reminisce about the children.

The jury, split evenly men to women, deliberated for about 12 hours over three days before reaching its verdict. On Wednesday, the jurors listened again to the state definition of insanity and asked to see pictures of the five young children: baby Mary, 2-year-old Luke, 3-year-old Paul, 5-year-old John and 7-year-old Noah.

Prosecutors had maintained that Yates failed to meet the state's definition of insanity: that a severe mental illness prevents someone who is committing a crime from knowing that it is wrong.

The jury had not been told that if they found her insane that Yates would be committed to a mental institution for treatment. If found guilty of murder she would have faced life in prison.

"I'm very disappointed," prosecutor Kaylynn Williford said. "For five years, we've tried to seek justice for these children."

In her first trial, Yates was convicted of capital murder and sentenced to life in prison. An appeals court overturned the conviction last year because erroneous testimony about a "Law & Order" television episode that didn't exist could have influenced the jury.

Defense attorneys presented much of the same evidence as in the first trial, including half a dozen psychiatrists who testified that Yates was so psychotic that she didn't know her actions were wrong. They said that in her delusional mind, she thought killing the youngsters was right.

Some testified about her two hospitalizations after suicide attempts in 1999, not long after her fourth child was born. At the time, the family lived in a converted bus. Dr. Eileen Starbranch, a psychiatrist, again testified about how she warned Yates and her husband not to have more children because her postpartum psychosis would probably return.

Yates' stayed in a mental hospital for about two weeks in April and 10 days in May 2001. Psychiatrists testified that she was catatonic and wouldn't eat and that her postpartum condition from Mary's birth in November worsened after her father died in March.

Yates did not testify. But a few state and defense psychiatrists who evaluated Yates played some videotaped segments for jurors.

During a July 2001 jail interview, Yates told psychiatrist Lucy Puryear that her children had not been progressing normally because she was a bad mother, and that she killed them because "in their innocence, they would go to heaven."

The state's key witness was Dr. Michael Welner, a forensic psychiatrist who interviewed Yates for two days in May. He testified that Yates killed the youngsters because she felt overwhelmed and inadequate as a mother, not for altruistic reasons.

Welner said that although Yates may have been psychotic on the day of the murders, it wasn't until the next day in jail that she talked about Satan, wanting to be executed and saving her kids from hell. He said the hallucination may have been triggered by the stresses of being naked in a cell on suicide watch and realizing what she had done.

Welner said Yates knew her actions were wrong and showed it in multiple ways: waiting until her husband left for work to kill them, covering the bodies with a sheet and calling 911 soon after the crime.

Prosecutors also brought back a key witness from the first trial, Dr. Park Dietz, the forensic psychiatrist whose testimony led to her conviction being overturned. The judge barred attorneys in this trial from mentioning the earlier testimony problem.

Dietz again testified that Yates knew killing her children was wrong because she knew it was a sin.

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# THE BAY CITY TIMES

## Take deadbeats' cars for child support,

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

Parents who refuse to hand over money to support their children deserve most of what they get from a Bay County Friend of the Court campaign to impound their cars.

Courts have ordered the child support payments, and the kids need the cash.

So the deadbeats' cars now are auctioned off if they refuse to pay.

That is only right, and just.

But we are no fans of heaping on the humiliation.

The steel "boots" used to lock up the wheels of deadbeats' cars state, "Child Support Enforcement."

It's supposed to embarrass them into paying.

That, of course, assumes that anyone who refuses to support their own children - their own flesh and blood - are actually capable of shame.

The tactic is beneath the rest of society.

It's a taunt.

By all means, make the deadbeats pay. Arrest them, if needed. Impound their property and auction it off.

Tell anyone who is interested why.

Those consequences are humiliation enough.

Rubbing it in just rubs off on society.

It is beneath us.

- Our View is the editorial opinion of The Bay City Times, as determined by the newspaper's editorial board, which includes the editorial page editor,

the editor and the publisher.

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## BRIAN DICKERSON: An absent dad's letter to a son he never knew

**BY BRIAN DICKERSON**  
FREE PRESS COLUMNIST

July 26, 2006

A 17-year-old from Fraser is suing his mother in Macomb County Circuit Court to learn the identity of his biological father.

The teen, whose anonymity is being protected by the court -- a few judges, it seems, still make reasonable concessions to the special vulnerability of the young -- says DNA tests suggest his biological dad is someone other than the man who raised him.

His mother insists the father is the ex-husband with whom she raised her son until her 1995 divorce -- the same ex-husband whose lawsuit seeking relief from child-support obligations was rejected in 2004 -- and that the DNA tests that piqued her son and ex-husband's suspicions are false.

Now Macomb County Circuit Judge Mark Switalski will decide whether to dismiss the teen's lawsuit or let his attorney question the mother under oath.

If there's anything sadder than the spectacle of a son suing his mom, I've not stumbled across it in my quarter-century of wading through courtroom pathos.

But if the facts revealed so far establish anything, it's that the 17-year-old known in court papers as "Minor J" needs some good fatherly counsel, and he needs it now.

I have no idea whether the alternate dad Minor J suspects is responsible for his conception even exists. But I've a pretty good idea what such a man would say, assuming he had a little wisdom and a bit of sympathy for Minor J:

*Dear Son,*

*I read about your lawsuit in the paper and felt the same mixture of shame and grief that overtakes me every time I think of you, which is more often than you might imagine.*

*I'm not sure, when all is said and done, whether not having me in your life has cost you all that much. It's cost me plenty.*

*For starters, there's the guilt of knowing I left another man to assume all the disciplinary and financial responsibilities that were properly mine. When I think how little I've contributed, I feel like a real jerk.*

*Then again, that other guy got to watch you grow up. Sometimes, when I imagine all I've missed, I think I'm the one who was cheated.*

*I'm not sure what you hope to accomplish by learning my identity now. Your lawyer said in the newspaper that you want to know whether you face any hereditary risk of cancer or hypertension, although I have to say that's not the way any 17-year-old I've ever met thinks.*

*Far as I know, my genetic contribution doesn't put you at higher risk for any of those things. But just to be safe, why not assume you are at risk? A few more helpings of broccoli a month won't kill you.*

*It sounds to me like the real impetus for this lawsuit comes from your mom's ex-husband. He's been trying to prove that you're somebody else's kid for a couple of years now -- which is kind of odd, given that you live with him. And I'm guessing your lawsuit, which he supports, has more to do with his anger than with your curiosity. I'm sorry you got caught up in all that.*

*I guess all I'm saying, son, is that you can stop looking for your "real" father; he's the man who raised you, whatever the DNA tests say. I don't think I'm in any position to help you -- or harm you, for that matter -- any more than I already have.*

*All the best,*

*The Dad Who Never Was*

Contact **BRIAN DICKERSON** at 248-351-3697 or [dicker@freepress.com](mailto:dicker@freepress.com).

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July 26, 2006

## Pilot program offers free colon cancer tests to poor

Effort is part of a push to save lives by screening more adults for nation's No. 2 cancer killer.

**Lauran Neergaard / Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON** — It's the cancer with the yuck factor, that part of the anatomy lots of people would rather ignore.

And too many are ignoring it possibly to death: Nearly 42 million Americans over 50 aren't getting checks for colorectal cancer, the nation's No. 2 cancer killer.

Now in five states, a government-funded project is beginning to offer free testing for the poor, part of a new push to better fight one of the few cancers that can be prevented, not just treated, if screening uncovers the earliest signs of trouble.

Money isn't the only barrier. This is a cancer that can silently lurk in anyone, particularly during middle age and beyond.

Yet colorectal cancer doesn't get the attention of breast and prostate cancers that claim fewer lives.

### Touchy subject

"It's a part of the body they don't want anybody to mess with," said Bruce Jenkins of the Missouri health department's "Screening for Life" program, which this month began the free screening for low-income residents of St. Louis.

Many at risk don't know there are screening tests, and those who do "I think have the idea that it's worse than it really is," said Dr. Daniel Blumenthal of Atlanta's Morehouse School of Medicine. "Even I was surprised when I had my colonoscopy. I had imagined something pretty awful and it really wasn't at all" -- a message Blumenthal calls vital to spread.

Some 148,600 Americans will be diagnosed with colorectal cancer this year, and more than 55,000 will die.

Up to 60 percent of those deaths could be prevented if everyone age 50 and older underwent routine screening, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention says. Yet just over half get tested.

The disease usually starts with growths called polyps that can take a decade to turn cancerous. Find and remove them in time, and you can avoid cancer altogether.

### Bridging the gap

Medicare pays for colorectal screening, but that federal insurance program is for people 65 and older, a long wait for the low-income 50-year-old with no insurance. Enter the CDC's new free-screening project, the first major federal effort to target that population -- and one that, if it works, might be expanded nationwide.

Participants in Suffolk County, N.Y., and Baltimore will receive colonoscopies, in which doctors use a long flexible tube to visually inspect the colon. In St. Louis; Seattle/King County, Wash.; and statewide in Nebraska most participants will receive at-home fecal tests to detect hidden blood in the stool.

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July 26, 2006

**Letters**

## Homeless man gets cheated on finder's fee Unjust rewards

Based on the July 22 headline, "Honesty pays," The Detroit News thinks \$100 is a good reward for returning \$21,000. And Neil Lehto, the West Bloomfield attorney who is the son of the beneficiary of a homeless man's honesty, seems pretty proud of forking over \$100. Charles Moore could have left those bonds in the trash, never to be seen again. The attorney probably tips more (percentage-wise) at his favorite restaurant. But then again, maybe not.

*Richard Gryebet*

*Warren*

## Family shows disrespect

A lousy \$100 for recovering almost \$21,000! That amounts to a mere .0047 percent return. Since the Lehto family did not miss the \$21,000, it surely could afford to compensate Charles Moore with a decent reward. How about 1 percent or even 0.5 percent of the cash he recovered? Or, maybe the Lehtos could pay Moore the same percentage that Neil Lehto charges for his attorney services?

I see the lousy reward as a continuation of disrespect for the worth of our fellow human beings. The Lehtos should cough up some more money.

*Marie Fabrizio Pelak*

*Warren*

## Quit being a cheapskate

The Lehto family should be ashamed of offering Charles Moore \$100 for returning the savings bonds. Yes, Moore did the right thing, but here is a man who is down on his luck, and this family receives this windfall of more than \$20,000. The story states Neil Lehto's mother sees this as an entitlement -- an entitlement she would not have if not for Moore's honesty. Neil Lehto should give Moore money out of his own pocket and quit being such a cheapskate.

*Ali Smith*

*Detroit*

## Try a 10% recovery tip

The family should have given the homeless man at least 10 percent of the money, if not more. After all, the careless family had discarded the bonds and would not have been able to get any money had the good Samaritan not reported his find. I'm sure the man felt \$100 was a large amount of money given his living conditions, but his good act deserved more compensation.

*Pete Hilton*

*Byron, Ga.*

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July 26, 2006

## Who gets this child?

### Grandparents fight for custody from foster couple

**Karen Bouffard / The Detroit News**

**LIVONIA** -- Two-year-old Antonio Badilla was sleepy-eyed in the arms of his foster mother one day recently after enjoying a lazy afternoon bottle.

Thankfully, the youngster, who has lived with Michael and Janet Simeone of Livonia for most of his life, was oblivious to the battle raging around him.

Antonio's mother died last August of a drug overdose. His father is unknown. And now the Simeones want to adopt him. But his grandparents, Dawn and Chris Kurtz, who are already raising Antonio's two sisters, want to adopt him, too.

"Sure, they fell in love with him, and I'm happy for that ... (but) blood belongs with blood," said Dawn Kurtz of Grosse Ile. "I will lay my life on the line for him and so will Papa."

In a contradiction of its own policies, the state Department of Human Services has sided with the foster parents, side-stepping both state and federal protocols that urge agencies to give preference to relatives, and to keep siblings together, when placing children in foster or adoptive homes.

On Aug. 1, the DHS will ask Wayne Circuit Judge James Lacey to finalize Antonio's adoption. If he does, the Kurtzes' attorney plans an immediate appeal.

In the meantime, Antonio is in the care of the Simeones, where he is allowed no contact with his grandparents or siblings.

Bloomfield Hills attorney Richard Victor, a nationally recognized family law expert, said the department's decision flies in the face of court rulings that recognize the powerful ties that bind children to their birth families. The nation watched in agony in 1993 when 2 1/2 - year-old "Baby Jessica" was torn from her adoptive parents, Jan and Roberta DeBoer of Ann Arbor, and returned to her Iowa birth parents. She had lived with the DeBoers since birth.

State officials would not comment on Antonio's case, but said their first priority is always the welfare of the child. Methodist Children's Home Society, the Redford-based agency that the state hired to handle Antonio's foster care placement and adoption, also would not comment on the case.

"The established environment of a child this age is very important, but not so important that it should trump the long-term benefits that this child would otherwise gain from the opportunity to live with their blood half siblings and grandparents," Victor said.

"Courts historically have ruled that children, if at all possible, should remain within their family unit unless there is a strong showing that there is potential threat of harm," Victor said.

Lisa Badilla's drug addiction had already cost her two children when she gave birth to Antonio in spring 2004.

Badilla deeply resented her mother, Dawn Kurtz, for taking legal guardianship of Cinnamon, now 11, and Jasmine, 7, during her yearslong battle with alcohol, drugs and later, mental illness.

"I told her, 'I'm not trying to take your children, I'm trying to save your children,' " Kurtz said.

When Antonio was born, Methodist Children's Home took him from the hospital and, at Badilla's request, placed him in foster care with the Simeones.

Badilla's battle with drugs ended on Aug. 20 when she died from a drug overdose.

Kurtz called Methodist Children's Home to arrange to bring Antonio home.

The agency refused, so Kurtz took it to court. At first, Lacey ruled that Antonio should go home to his grandparents.

But he later reversed that ruling.

The DHS and the Simeones argued that Antonio should stay with the Simeones because he had lived with them nearly his entire life, according to court documents.

They also claim that the Kurtzes made no effort to have contact with Antonio before Lisa Badilla died -- and that a criminal background check of the Kurtzes revealed that Chris Kurtz had some brushes with the law.

Chris Kurtz was convicted of petty larceny when he was 18, carrying a concealed weapon in 1995, and fraudulent procurement of a narcotic drug in 1997. He was sentenced to fines and probation for the offenses.

His most serious charges came in 2004, when he pleaded guilty to several -- including a felony weapons charge, resisting arrest and driving while intoxicated -- for an incident on his motorcycle. He was sentenced to two years of probation and \$710 in fines.

"I did it, and I regret it," Chris Kurtz said. Bill Johnson, director of field services for DHS, said that only sex offenders are forbidden from adopting foster children in the state.

"Beyond that, it is possible to place children for adoption with a person who has a criminal history," Johnson said.

Victor, who represented the DeBoers, wondered why the grandfather's record is a problem now, when the couple already have custody of Cinnamon and Jasmine.

"(Perhaps) they were trying to find reasons to hold in favor of the placement they preferred, as opposed to looking at what was in the child's best interests," Victor said. "If that's true, that's most unfortunate."

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## As voters decide on juvenile justice millage, new questions arise

Written by GRETCHEN COCHRAN & THOMAS P. MORGAN

Wednesday, 26 July 2006

### Following Highfields, violations found at other facilities

Just as voters get ready to vote Aug. 8 on whether to continue paying a tax to support the county's juvenile justice programs, new questions have arisen about the quality of the facilities to which Ingham County youths are sent.

A City Pulse investigation shows that the problems at Highfields Inc.'s Youth Opportunity Camp in Onondaga, which the county closed for five months after complaints of staff abuse, may have been just the tip of the iceberg.

Nine of the 14 similar programs across the state used by Ingham County logged violations in the past three years, some receiving about the same amount of substantiated complaints as Highfields, according to the Michigan Family Independence Agency.

Tying Highfields with nine violations was Turning Point Youth Center in St. Johns, where county judges have sent five children since October 2003.

It was there in August 2004 that a staff member was found to be making inappropriate sexual contact via e-mail with a police officer posing as a 14-year-old boy, according a special investigation report conducted by the state.

In a February 2005 incident at Turning Point, a resident has his arm broken by a staff member while being restrained.

That same year, a state investigation revealed that a female staff member at Turning Point had been engaging in a sexual relationship with a male resident. The worker was subsequently fired.

The Lakeside Treatment & Learning Center, a home for abused children in Kalamazoo, logged eight violations, according to the state. Ingham County Judges have sent five kids there in the last three years.

In December of last year, a 10-year-old boy became verbally and physically abusive to staff members,



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**Open Free Studio for Teens**  
 July 26, 2006 (3:00 pm)  
 (Art)

**Music in the Park**  
 July 26, 2006 (6:30 pm)  
 (Events)

**Caregivers Support Group.**  
 July 26, 2006 (7:00 pm)  
 (Classes and Seminars)

**A Touch of the Past: Victorian Textiles.**  
 July 26, 2006 (7:00 pm)  
 (Art)

**"Service" by Jodi Patterson**  
 July 26, 2006 (7:00 pm)  
 (Art)

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(Illustration by Ben Corr)



according to state reports. A supervisor grabbed the 80-pound boy by the shirt and threw him to the ground. The boy got back to his feet and hit a worker. The supervisor then picked the boy up by the neck.

“You’re choking me,” the boy said in a strained voice. The supervisor let him go and walked away. He was later suspended.

In another incident this March at Lakeside, a boy broke a window and held a shard of glass to another boy’s neck. The same afternoon, another boy grabbed a fellow resident in a headlock and repeatedly punched him in the face, giving him a bloody nose. Both attacks occurred during an afternoon shift in which the center had half the staff level required by the state.

Back at Highfields, interim president Larry Miesner says 38 people have been hired to help staff the recently re-opened camp, each receiving 80 hours of training. Supervisors have received an additional 40 hours of training, particularly in techniques designed to de-escalate potentially volatile situations, says Miesner, former director of the state Bureau of Juvenile Justice



‘We would never want to use a place where a kid would be at risk. That is, in fact, why we send kids out of state.’  
— Ingham County Family Court Judge Janelle Lawless

“Remember, the kinds of youths in a program like this are typically large, angry young men,” Miesner said.

Incidents like these involving overzealous staff and angry young people are happening at youth centers all across the state — not just Highfields — yet judges continue to send kids to the residential treatment centers.

When asked why this was happening, presiding Family Court Judge Janelle Lawless said: “We would never want to use a place where a kid would be at risk. That is, in fact, why we send kids out of state.” (Judges have sent 188 children to out-of-state residential centers since October 2003.)

### The warning

County judges continue to place children in the cited residential centers in spite of a damning report issued in 2003 by Edward J. Latessa, Ph. D, who leads the University of Cincinnati’s Center for Criminal Justice Research.

Latessa cautioned the county against referring children to “boot camps or programs that rely on wilderness and adventure-type activities to change behaviors. These types of programs have been found to be ineffective at reducing recidivism and may actually increase recidivism rates.”

“The system should implement a formal management system to hold the treatment agencies accountable for the services they provide,” the report said.

### A new direction

Ingham County taxpayers paid \$56,000 for Latessa’s 89-page report out of funds generated by the Juvenile Justice millage. The millage, approved by Ingham County voters in 2002, has raised \$11.5 million, with about half going toward consultants, new programs, additional staff and a youth center on Lansing’s south side. According to the county, \$4.9 million remains unspent.

On Aug. 8, voters will be asked to renew the millage for five years. At a rate of 0.6 mills, the owner of a home with an assessed value of \$75,000 would continue to pay about \$45 per year to fund the juvenile delinquent programs.

#### Syndicate

RSS	0.91
RSS	1.0
RSS	2.0
ATOM	0.3
OPML	SHARE IT!

But for the next cycle, many county officials hope to do something different.

“We didn’t want to continue spending money on old patterns, throwing good money after bad,” Ingham County Commissioner Tina Weatherwax-Grant says.

Members of the county commission’s Judiciary Committee, which Weatherwax-Grant chairs, want to keep as many kids out of the court system as possible by identifying their problems before they ever have to face a judge.

In February of this year, the same month Highfields closed, the county received another report, this one from Karen Chinn, a South Carolina consultant who specializes in criminal justice.

The centerpiece of Chinn’s recommendations, which cost the county \$46,000, was the establishment of an assessment and treatment center as an alternative to the court system.

The center would house an alternative day school, a treatment center and an assessment center, and would serve 30 children during the day as well as an additional 30 students in its after-school programs.

“There are a lot of things they did with the money, but most all of it has been expanding residential placement,” Chinn says. “Now it’s time to create a better, community based assessment for kids.”

County commissioners agreed with Chinn, and are scouting locations for a new center. Officials considered the abandoned Verlinden Elementary School, but they weren’t able to submit a bid by the May 25 deadline.

Officials are considering four buildings, said Travis Faulds, director of youth programs for the Ingham County Family Court: the former Lansing Board of Realtors building on the city’s west side, the old Sparrow Hospital Professional building on South Pennsylvania Avenue, the shuttered Holmes Street School and an office building at 3001 W. Main St.

If an existing building cannot be found, it would take about \$2 million to build a new one, according to officials. Operating costs are estimated to be about \$1.1 million per year. All of it would be funded through the millage.

But the potential project is not without conflict. In what comes down to a power struggle, the Family Court Judges chafe at the idea of having the county commission directing their mission, even though the commission controls the court’s budget.

Circuit Judge Laura Baird, one of four judges in the Family Court division, told Chinn in February, “We will not support an assessment center if it is not in our control.”

Despite concerns of control, both the judicial and legislative branches of county government are behind the idea of an assessment and treatment center.

In some cases, kids are doing well in school but have no after-school supervision and are flirting with gangs or criminal behavior. There is no place to send those kids now, except to residential programs, says Faulds, who sits on a committee that issues recommends to judges where kids are sent. That committee also includes a juvenile court officer and the court psychologist.

“We don’t want another incident of shutting down a program,” Faulds says. “It’s a new trend in juvenile justice. Punishing and shaming doesn’t work.”



“We didn’t want to continue spending money on old patterns, throwing good money after bad.” — Ingham County Commissioner Tina Weatherwax-Grant, on the need for new programs for juvenile offenders



Or as Circuit Judge James Giddings, who presides over the county's Truancy Court program, puts it, "It's pay me now or pay me much more later."

Proponents of the assessment and treatment center say it could lead to fewer children appearing in Giddings' courtroom.

### **Frequent flyers**

It's a sunny afternoon in late June. Fifteen middle school students traipse into Truancy Court to face Giddings. Most of the kids are frowning, some taking their seats with their arms grumpily folded across their midsections. All are accompanied by an adult, either a mother or an aunt. The kids are in trouble for not attending school and not responding to programs set up to help them.

But before Giddings can get to the truants, he has to finish with a 15-year-old boy who just returned from the Muncie Reception and Diagnostic Center in Muncie, Ind., a tough place where inmates clean toilets with toothbrushes.

County judges have sent 57 children to Muncie since October 2003. One of Chinn's major criticisms of Ingham County's juvenile justice system is that far too many kids are being sent out of state.

In the last three years, county judges have sent 188 children to out-of-state residential facilities, with the Muncie Reception and Diagnostic Center being their favorite. Twenty-nine girls were sent as far away the Mingus Mountain Academy in Prescott Valley, Ariz., nearly 1,600 miles from Lansing.

Ingham County's out-of-state placement rate is nearly seven times the national average, according to a survey conducted by the Council of Juvenile Correctional Administrators.

Chinn says moving children away from their families doesn't help rehabilitate them, but instead, only makes it more difficult for troubled children to reintegrate upon returning.

"National studies will show that a greater impact on changing long-term behavior and really intervening in a kid's life is going to involve working with the family of the unit," Chinn says. "That's not going to happen when you place the kid out of state or wherever the judges decide."

But keeping kids close to their families requires having better local programs, Faulds says.

"From the judges' point of view, the quality of programs and services we're seeing out of state are far superior to in-state providers," Faulds says.

Nervy Oliver, deputy administrator for the juvenile court, concurs: "The judges need options here so they don't have to place kids out of the community."

Even though the county commissioners and the judges are trying to enhance local, community-based programs, there are still going to be children that need intensive, residential care, Lawless says.

### **Kids' court**

The boy who just returned from Muncie stands shyly before Giddings. His hands are clasped, secured with handcuffs. Two chains hang from them, connecting to manacles around his ankles.

The court officer explains that the boy wasn't responding to the restrictive environment in Muncie, racking up two or three violations each day. Instead of sending him back to Muncie, Giddings places him in the custody of his father and grandmother. He will be under intense probation, with follow-ups three times per week. He'll have to perform 100 hours of community service, face intensive family guidance, and will be tested regularly for drugs.

"You will return in October to report," Giddings tells the boy. "I want you doing your best. If you don't, you're going back to Muncie."

The boy, still bound in chains, shuffles out of the courtroom and into the waiting arms of his grandmother. For the first time, his face cracks a slight smile, revealing a dimple in each cheek.

Then Giddings proceeds with the truancy cases, of which there are about 400 each year.

“So have you been using drugs?” Giddings asks another boy. The boy shakes his head “no,” but his mother, standing beside him, nods “yes.” He has not been reporting for drug tests, but even when he was, he tested positive five times in a two-month period, according to the court officer.

“You will go to the county’s Youth Center for the weekend, to get your attention,” Giddings says, “and then report to Child and Family Services and an Alcoholics Anonymous program for teens.”

The boy doesn’t flinch. With an I-don’t-care stare and a fixed jaw, he swaggers out of the courtroom, his mother trailing behind, to prepare for his visit to the Youth Center, a short-term detention center operated by the county.

It might be too late for this boy, but Faulds and others hope the county’s new approach will spare many others.

“Kids and families are falling through the cracks now,” Faulds says. “They don’t get help until they get into the court system. They shouldn’t have to wait until then.”

Last Updated ( Wednesday, 26 July 2006 )

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July 26, 2006

## Police: Family hid runaway

Waterford couple, son may face charges for keeping Ortonville girl who was missing 2 years.

**Mike Martindale / The Detroit News**

**WATERFORD TOWNSHIP** -- A township couple and their 20-year-old son are expected to be arrested and face charges today for harboring a teenage runaway girl for nearly two years.

The Detroit News is not identifying the family until they are charged, nor the girl because of her age.

The Ortonville girl -- reported as a 15-year-old runaway in October 2004 -- was taken in by the family and hidden from investigators in their Waterford home, where she reportedly embraced their religion and was home-schooled under a false name. .

In June 2005, a family friend thought he recognized the girl in a car driven by a teenage boy and wrote down the license plate.

"A detective visited (the family) repeatedly since she ran away and was told time and time again they knew nothing about her whereabouts -- meanwhile she was hiding elsewhere in the house," said Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard.

The ruse fell apart July 14 when the girl's grandfather and a cousin heard a voice they thought matched the girl's inside a Dollar General Store in Waterford Township. The girl, whose hair had been dyed blond, told her grandfather he was mistaken, prompting the relatives to call police. The girl and the 59-year-old woman she was living with were questioned.

The woman identified the girl to police as "Kaylee Valentine," and said she was her daughter. The girl unsuccessfully tried to run from police.

Since being taken into custody this month for truancy, the girl has received counseling in Oakland County Children's Village. She told authorities she had been provided with "a loving home and religion" by the family.

The girl's parents are separated, and her father had moved out of state two years ago. Her father now believes his daughter was stolen "with the use of religion" -- an allegation Bouchard said investigators will explore to determine whether she went and stayed with the family voluntarily or was coerced.

"If she was held against her will, it could result in more serious charges," Bouchard said.

The harboring charge is a misdemeanor, punishable by up to one year in jail.

You can reach Mike Martindale at (248) 647-7226 or [mmartindale@detnews.com](mailto:mmartindale@detnews.com).

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# ClickOnDetroit.com

## Couple Accused Of Harboring Runaway With Religion

### *Teen Says She'd Like To Return To Couple's Home*

POSTED: 11:15 am EDT July 26, 2006

Charges are expected to be filed after a teenage runaway is found with a local family that she said gave her a loving home and religion.

The Ortonville girl -- whose name was not released -- was reported as a runaway on Oct. 22, 2004, when she was 15 years old, according to police. She was recently apprehended by Waterford police after relatives spotted her at a Dollar General Store.

On July 14, her grandfather and cousin said they heard a voice that matched the girl's while at the store. The girl had dyed her hair blond, but her cousin made a positive identification. Police said the girl denied she knew the relatives.

Police were called to the store and asked the girl and the 59-year-old woman accompanying her for identification. The woman -- who showed her identification to police -- claimed the girl "Kaylee Valentine" was her daughter. The girl ran from police, but was caught.

The girl was taken to Children's Village, where authorities confirmed her identification as the runaway from Ortonville. She admitted to hiding at a couple's home and professed to being a Christian, police said. She said the woman schooled her under a false name, and she did chores around the house.

The girl said she would like to return to the home when she turns 17 in September. She does not want charges filed against the couple and their 20-year-old son.

Police said the couple and their son could face charges of harboring a runaway. Their names have not been released pending charges.

The girl's parents agreed to have their daughter charged with truancy.

The girl's father is upset that the couple stole his daughter for almost two years with the use of religion, police said. Police have contacted an Ortonville minister who was expected to counsel the girl on the religious input from the couple.

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## Teen sentenced in negligent homicide case

By STEVE BROWNLEE, Journal Staff Writer

MARQUETTE — An Ishpeming teen will have to serve 30 days in jail despite receiving a delay of sentence after pleading no contest to negligent homicide in Marquette County Juvenile Court Monday.

The case is being handled in the juvenile court, part of the Family Division of the 25th Circuit Court.

The 16-year-old male was involved in a Jan. 21 traffic accident on U.S. 41 along Teal Lake in Negaunee that killed Erin Lawson, 23, of Ishpeming. The youth's vehicle struck another car before sliding into oncoming traffic and hitting Lawson's vehicle head-on, according to the Negaunee City Police Department.

The case has been handled by Judge Michael Anderegg of the Marquette County Probate Court.

Marquette County Prosecutor Gary Walker agreed to the plea that led to the delay of a possible prison sentence. Negligent homicide, when handled in an adult court, is a high-court misdemeanor that can carry two years in jail or prison and a \$2,000 fine, according to the Michigan Legislature's Web site.

The 30-day jail sentence, which doesn't have to be served on consecutive days, must be served during the next year, Anderegg said in court Monday.

Any other jail or prison time will not have to be served and the youth's record will be expunged if he meets a number of conditions during the next year while on probation.

The conditions include restricted driving privileges, which only allow him to drive to and from work. That condition was imposed at an April 7 probable cause hearing and continues until next April 7, Anderegg said.

The youth must also complete 200 hours of community service and pay up to \$840 for court costs, for counseling for members of the victim's family and attorney's fees. He must also participate in counseling, victim-offender reconciliation with members of the victim's family, and production of a video to be used in driver's training programs.

If these conditions are not met, or new offenses occur during the next year, the youth could face adult sanctions.

The youth is being allowed to live with an uncle in downstate Livingston County as he has since the April hearing, and will be supervised by the juvenile court there.



## Parolee gets 39 to 60 years for killing father

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

HILLSDALE (AP) -- A parolee who authorities say killed his father during an alcohol-fueled argument at their mobile home has been sentenced to 39 to 60 years in prison.

Jonathan A. Boggs was sentenced Monday by Hillsdale County Circuit Judge Michael Smith. Boggs, 28, pleaded guilty last month to second-degree murder in the death of Michael A. Boggs.

The body of Michael Boggs, 55, was discovered March 29 in a shallow grave near his home in Adams Township. Authorities say he had been choked until he was unconscious, then shot twice in the head.

Jonathan Boggs had been paroled in 2004 after serving about three years for felonious assault.

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## KALAMAZOO GAZETTE

### Fresh approach helps feed, educate seniors

Wednesday, July 26, 2006

By Natasha Robinson

[nrobinson@kalamazoogazette.com](mailto:nrobinson@kalamazoogazette.com) 388-7777

Wilma Johnson had a great incentive to visit Kalamazoo Farmer's Market for the first time Tuesday. She was one of many senior citizens in Kalamazoo County eligible for \$20 in free coupons for the market on Bank Street as a part of Senior Project Fresh.

Senior Project Fresh kicked off Tuesday morning, and more than 15 coupon books were distributed. The program serves Kalamazoo County residents 60 and over whose incomes are less than 185 percent of the poverty level.

Johnson, accompanied by her daughter, purchased green peppers and cucumbers, and was looking for more produce in her visit to the market.

"I'll probably come out more," she said.

On Thursday, representatives of the Michigan State University Extension's Kalamazoo County branch will be at the Farmer's Market, 1204 Bank St., with tips on how to choose and clean fresh fruits and vegetables, guidelines on healthy eating, and with more coupons to hand out.

The coupons, made possible by a partnership between Senior Services Inc. and the MSU Extension Center in Kalamazoo, are in \$2 increments and expire Oct. 31. This is the first time they're available for senior citizens in Kalamazoo County. Seven other counties in Michigan have participated in the program.

"The whole idea is twofold," said Ann Nieuwenhuis, MSU extension center Kalamazoo County director. "One, for senior citizens ... that live in Kalamazoo and are on a limited resource to know about the Farmer's Market and eat more fresh fruits and vegetables. Second, with what we're doing with WIC (the Women, Infants, and Children's program) and Senior Project Fresh, we're bringing in about \$20,000 worth of money into the Farmer's Market."

Coupons also have been dispersed to WIC-eligible residents in Kalamazoo County.

Vendors on Tuesday welcomed the coupons at the Farmer's Market, which can only be used in Michigan and to purchase items grown in Michigan. Vendors that participate in the program display a yellow sign next to their stand.

Amy Newton, a market vendor from RZ Produce in Bloomingdale, said she'd dealt with the Senior Project Fresh program in the past.

"I go to the Springfield Farmer's Market (to vend), and they've been taking senior-citizen coupons for the past couple years, and so I've been dealing with them for a couple of years," Newton said. "A lot of (senior citizens) told me today that they didn't even know the market was here (in Kalamazoo), so it makes them aware that we are here."

Goldina Nemedi heard about Senior Project Fresh at her senior living complex. She said she shops at the Farmer's Market often for fresh vegetables.

"The coupons will help," Nemedi said. "When you get Social Security, it comes once a month, and it doesn't go very far."



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## News Release

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### Department of Human Services, Michigan State Police partner to strengthen training for state's child welfare workers

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July 26, 2006

LANSING – Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS) Director Marianne Udow and Michigan State Police Director Colonel Peter C. Munoz today announced that the two departments are collaborating to strengthen the investigation training program for children's protective services (CPS) workers. The enhanced training will give workers and supervisors better tools to anticipate potentially dangerous situations, and will be required of all child protective service workers as part of an ongoing effort by the Michigan Department of Human Services to reform the state's child welfare system.

"We must do everything possible to protect Michigan's children and to keep them safe," said DHS Director Marianne Udow. "This collaboration with the Michigan State Police adds yet another additional element to our ongoing plan to fundamentally overhaul child protective services in Michigan."

DHS children's protective services workers conduct more than 75,000 investigations of abuse and neglect each year, which breaks down to approximately 100 cases per year for each worker.

"This expanded investigation training program is just one of many changes DHS is making to improve the state's child welfare system, said Udow. "The enhanced investigation training is designed to give our workers and supervisors better tools to detect and anticipate dangerous situations, conduct thorough investigations and make the best possible decisions regarding individual cases."

Michigan State Police staff closely reviewed the training that CPS workers currently receive and offered a five-step approach to strengthening the current investigative process.

"It is critical that CPS workers have the ability to conduct thorough and useful investigations in order to ensure the safety of the children they are charged with protecting," said Munoz. "We've partnered with the Department of Human Services in the past to provide limited training on occasion, but this is the first time the MSP will be providing a training program required for all CPS workers."

The five-step approach in the required training includes:

1. Development and use of an evidence checklist – DHS staff will utilize a checklist that includes a listing of observable factors that may indicate the presence of neglect or abuse. CPS workers will use this list to gauge the severity and number of factors in each case which determine the need to escalate the interaction with the family from a visit to an investigation.

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2. Development and use of a report writing handbook – DHS worker will use a handbook that details what the investigative report must include, allowing workers to gather better information during the course of the investigation.
3. Improved interview training – MSP training will improve the critical interviews that CPS workers conduct to determine child abuse or neglect and the need for law enforcement involvement.
4. Improved report writing training – MSP training will help CPS workers and foster care staff to more accurately document observations, information and statements during client interactions.
5. Enhanced Supervisory Training – CPS supervisors will be trained in the use of the evidence checklist and report writing handbook. Additionally, MSP training will help them develop an even higher level of technical knowledge in the areas of investigation and documentation in investigative reports.

For more information about the Department of Human Services, go to [www.michigan.gov/dhs](http://www.michigan.gov/dhs)

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